

REMARKS:

Applicant has carefully considered the Office Action mailed June 11, 2004.

Reconsideration of the application in view of this amendment in response thereto is respectfully requested.

The invention taught and claimed in the present application can be briefly described as follows: the interconnecting mechanism includes a ball member rotatively captured within a body member. Figs. 1-8 shows an embodiment wherein the ball member is connected to a towing vehicle and the body member is connected to a towed vehicle. Figs. 9-13 shows an embodiment wherein the body member is connected to the towing vehicle and the ball member is connected to the towed vehicle. For some applications, the ball member may be constructed as a single solid member, as shown in Figs. 2-5 and 10-11. For other applications, it may be desirable to form portions of the ball member from materials such as nylon or teflon, for example. In those instances, the ball is split with the split portions positioned on opposing sides of a disc of the shaft member to enable the interconnecting mechanism to withstand the many-thousands-of-pounds pull experienced by the tow bar when in use. The split ball configuration is shown in Figs. 7-8 and 12.

Correspondence between the claims and embodiments is as shown in the first table on the following page. Similarly, correspondence between the Figures and embodiments is as shown in the second table on the following page. As a result, it appears that the restriction should more appropriately require an election between the embodiment wherein the ball member is connected

to the towing vehicle, namely Figs. 1-8, and the embodiment wherein the ball member is

Claims	Ball Member connected to Towing Vehicle		Ball Member connected to Towed Vehicle	
	Solid Ball	Split Ball	Solid Ball	Split Ball
1-5	X	X	X	X
6-8	X	X		
9		X		
10-12	X	X		
13-16			X	X
17				X
18-21			X	X
22	X	X		
23			X	X

Figures	Ball Member connected to Towing Vehicle		Ball Member connected to Towed Vehicle	
	Solid Ball	Split Ball	Solid Ball	Split Ball
1	X	X		
2-5	X			
6	X	X		
7-8		X		
9			X	X
10-11			X	
12				X
13			X	X

connected to the towed vehicle, namely Figs. 9-13. In that event, claims 1-5 are generic claims, claims 6-12 and 22 are species claims relative to Figs.1-8, and claims 13-21 and 23 are species claims relative to Figs. 9-13. Accordingly, claims 13-21 and 23 have been cancelled without

prejudice or disclaimer while requesting that the cancelled claims be reinstated and considered if generic claims 1 or 5 are allowed.

Although applicant believes the aforescribed restriction is more appropriate under the circumstances, in an attempt to fully respond to the restriction requirement of the Office Action, consider the following:

The Examiner restricted the application under 35 U.S.C. § 121 to one of the following:

Species I directed to the tow bar (Figs. 1-6) and the reinforced ball member (Fig. 5);
Species II directed to the tow bar (Fig. 10) and the reinforced ball member (Figs. 7-8);
Species III directed to the tow bar (Figs. 11) and the reinforced ball member (Fig. 12).

In regard to Species I, the Figures selected by the Examiner include both the solid ball and the split ball configuration of the embodiment wherein the ball member is connected to the towing vehicle.

In regard to Species II, the Figures selected by the Examiner include both the split ball configuration of the embodiment wherein the ball member is connected to the towing vehicle and the solid ball configuration of the embodiment wherein the ball member is connected to the towed vehicle.

In regard to Species III, the Figures selected by the Examiner include both the solid ball and the split ball configuration of the embodiment wherein the ball member is connected to the towed vehicle.

Pursuant to the Office Action, Species I, including generic claims 1-5 and species claims 6-12 and 22 as hereinbefore described, is elected for continued prosecution. Species claims 13-

Application No. 10/840,033
Merton Hahne et al
Page 24

21 and 23 are hereby withdrawn from consideration unless generic claims 1 or 5 are allowed. In that event, applicant requests that claims 13-21 and 23 be reinstated and considered as to allowability.

Respectfully submitted,

MERTON HAHNE et al

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Donald R. Schoonover", with a stylized, flowing script.

Donald R. Schoonover, Reg. No. 34,924
4211 Rolling Hills Drive
Nixa, Missouri 65714-8771
Telephone (417)724-2188
Facsimile (417)724-2469